



Fall/Winter 2009

Recycling the Right Way

Good Intentions Aren't Always Enough

Even avid recyclers who truly want to waste less and be more “green”, don’t always know exactly how Frederick County’s residential recycling program works. And many people don’t understand what happens to their recyclables after they are placed out for curbside collection. This often leads to making guesses—about what can be recycled, about how materials can be collected and other details that affect the success of the program. **Currently, more than 7% of what our residents set out for recycling collection is actually trash!**

We’re here to help! This flyer describes some fundamentals of the recycling program. If you still have questions, from what’s recyclable to how it gets recycled, call us at 301-600-2960, or send email to: recycle@FrederickCountyMD.gov. We also have staff available to present programs and information on recycling to your group or for special events; help us spread the word! **The more that residents understand what and how to recycle, the more successful and sustainable Frederick County’s recycling program will be.**



Cart and bin placed out for curbside collection.

Please DON'T:

- ✗ **Put non-recyclable materials into your collection container.** *When in doubt, throw it out!*
- ✗ **Place recyclable materials inside garbage or other bags.** *The only exceptions to this rule are shredded paper, which should be placed inside a paper bag, and plastic bags marked with a recycling symbol, which should be gathered together inside a single bag.*
- ✗ **Leave styrofoam packing materials inside a cardboard box or other container.**
- ✗ **Leave liquids inside of containers.** *All containers should be emptied!*
- ✗ **Recycle microwaveable plastics.** *This includes frozen dinner trays, take-out meal containers, and items marked “microwave safe”.*
- ✗ **Recycle thin, brittle, “clamshell” plastics.** *This includes fruit, bakery and deli containers as well as others, regardless of what number is imprinted on them.*
- ✗ **Recycle used paper plates, greasy pizza boxes, tissues, waxed paper or any soiled paper products.**



Why NOT:

- ➔ **It makes the recycling program less efficient and reduces the value of the recyclable materials.**
- ➔ **Unlike garbage, recyclable materials must be sorted.** *This means that if items were placed in a bag someone at the sorting facility would have to manually open every bag—something that simply isn't feasible given the quantity of material collected from across the county.*
- ➔ **NO styrofoam of any kind is accepted for recycling in Frederick County.**
- ➔ **Liquids increase the program's expense and decrease its efficiency and success.**
- ➔ **Microwaveable plastics are treated to be highly heat-resistant.** *This makes them difficult to recombine with other plastics.*
- ➔ **They just don't recycle well in our system.** *These materials generally don't survive the mechanical collection and sorting processes in a recyclable condition.*
- ➔ **Unlike other materials, paper is absorbent.** *This means that once oils get on paper they bind to its fibers and cannot be separated.*

- **Did you know that the process of collecting, transporting, sorting and disposing of non-recyclable waste costs Frederick County's recycling program more than \$40,000 each month?**



How It All Works

For Recycling to Work, Everyone Has to Do Their Part

It Starts With You

The first part of the recycling program relies on voluntary household participation and residents' basic understanding of how the system functions. *You* help make it all work!

There's a lot you can do to help ensure the success of Frederick County's recycling program—from collecting the proper materials, to gathering them in a suitable manner, to setting out your recyclables correctly for curbside pick-up—little details make a big difference.

Our program is *single stream*—this means no sorting of your recyclable materials needs to be done. As long as you leave trash out, taking care of what does go into your cart or bin is pretty easy. The list to the right provides some helpful hints.

- To know what is and is not recyclable, start by looking at the picture on your recycling cart's lid, visit our website for more information or call our office with any questions.
- If you use bags to collect recyclables inside your house, the materials must be dumped loose into the collection cart or bin.
- With any material, always remember: **When in doubt, throw it out!** Just because it's plastic or has a recycling symbol on it doesn't mean it's recyclable *here in Frederick County!* To find out more about local plastics recycling guidelines, please read our factsheet online at: www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/plastic



The curbside recycling program makes it easy to keep valuable resources from being wasted.

The Collection Crew

Frederick County has contracted Allied Waste Services, Inc. to provide curbside collection as well as general customer service for the residential recycling program. The collection crews provide service to more than 73,000 households, divided into ten collection regions across the county.

Using the latest technology creates a more efficient collection process and provides a better ability to track what's

Customer Service Needs? Call Allied Waste at 301-694-6498, or send email to: FrederickRecycles@republicservices.com



going on in the recycling program. It is the goal of the Allied Waste staff to ensure that curbside recycling collection runs smoothly, safely and successfully.

To assist with these goals, the crews need your container to be placed out by 6am of the day they are to be emptied. They should be placed within 3-6 feet of the curb, on level ground if possible, in acceptable containers and away from mailboxes or other obstructions.

Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)



Our recyclables are sent to the Recycle America MRF, located in Elkridge, MD.

A materials recovery facility (MRF) is where your single stream recyclables get separated, sorted and sold to the markets that will ultimately reuse the materials.

The work done here is a blend of modern technology and human assistance. While machines have been designed to separate metals, paper, glass and plastics, humans are critical for the removal of nonrecyclable items from the

sorting line. When residents place the correct materials in their bin it makes the recycling process more efficient, as well as increases the market value of the recovered materials.

A video of Frederick County's recycling program, including scenes filmed inside the MRF, may be seen on our website, and is also available on DVD by request.

